






## Graduate School

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

DATE: March 15, 2024

TO: School/College Deans  
Department Chairs  
Directors of Graduate Study

FROM: Charles L. Isbell, Jr., Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs   
Robert G. Cramer, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration   
William J. Karpus, Dean of the Graduate School 

RE: Graduate Assistant Minimum Stipend Forecasting Plan (FY25-FY28)

On November 30, 2023, we issued a memo setting the minimum Graduate Assistant (GA) and internal fellowship stipend rates for 2024-25, as the first step in a multi-year graduate student support plan that allows students, principal investigators, departments/programs, and schools/colleges to plan for future stipend increases. What follows is the minimum stipend forecasting plan projecting stipend rates **three additional years** into the future. Our work to arrive at a new minimum stipend for graduate assistants is based on these key principles:

1. Stipends are a part of a competitive benefits package that includes tuition remission and health insurance and are designed to help graduate students defray their cost of living so that they can focus on advanced studies and degree completion.
2. Stipends are constructed to take into account the various costs of graduate student attendance at UW-Madison, **including segregated fees**.

The UW-Madison minimum annualized stipend for a 50% GA or internal fellowship appointment will be:

- 2024-25: \$32,396 (14% increase from 2023-24)
- 2025-26: \$35,636 (10% increase from 2024-25)
- 2026-27: \$37,417 (5% increase from 2025-26)
- 2027-28: \$39,288 (5% increase from 2026-27)

This plan is designed to meet our principles and will both move us to and help us remain at competitive rates; it also provides increased clarity about future rates, which should assist with planning. As has been the past practice, departments/programs may set stipends above the minimum to be competitive with their own peer

### Office of the Dean

217 Bascom Hall  
www.grad.wisc.edu

500 Lincoln Drive  
dean@grad.wisc.edu

Madison WI 53706-1380  
(608) 263-1353

departments/programs in their own disciplines. The increases described in this plan are increases to the minimum stipend, and have no direct effect on programs/departments paying above these minimums.

In addition to a stipend, GA appointments above 33.3% and internal fellowship appointments include tuition remission (worth \$2,682-\$24,054/year depending on residency and credit enrollment) and access to State Group Health plans at a reduced out-of-pocket premium (as low as \$56/month) with an annual UW-Madison employer contribution of \$8,020 (for an individual). A cross-functional team at UW–Madison is working diligently with colleagues at the Universities of Wisconsin on developing an approach to paid parental leave that will further enhance our benefits, including for most graduate students. Information about the full extent of university support should be included in offer/admission letters to prospective graduate students. A template letter for use in Fall 2025 admission letters that includes this and other important information will be provided by the Graduate School Dean's Office.

Further, to help students focus on advanced studies, achieve timely degree completion, and receive preparation for future career outcomes, the stipend forecasting plan also includes working with departments to improve faculty mentorship of graduate students and assist graduate students in developing mentor and mentee skills. Such evidence-based curricula are already being used by the Center for Improvement of Mentoring Experiences in Research (CIMER), WISCIENCE, and the Delta Program. We plan to implement them across campus more widely by the end of FY28.

The Graduate School will continue to communicate with departments/programs on the specifics of the rates as well as collect and approve actual stipend setting information every fall. Working with the schools and colleges, the Graduate School will continue to explore a broad set of issues affecting graduate students.

Information about the forecasting plan for minimum stipends and other benefits will be shared with graduate students beginning next week via email and in the weekly graduate student newsletter, as well as other communications channels. We will also provide more detailed information, including implementation specifics and the potential availability of modest bridge funding for some researchers, to schools and colleges in the next month.

cc: Jennifer Mnookin, Chancellor  
Cynthia Czajkowski, Interim Vice Chancellor for Research  
Diana Harvey, Vice Chancellor for Strategic Communication  
David Murphy, Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration  
Natalie Feggstad, Budget Director, Madison Budget Office  
Patrick Sheehan, Chief Human Resource Officer, Office of Human Resources  
Petra Schroeder, Associate Vice Chancellor, OVCR  
Marcy Carlson, Associate Dean, Graduate School